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MONTANA POST

Winter 2002–2003

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[**From the Director**](#)

by Arnie Olsen

As we head into the 2003 legislative session, we are certainly worried about further impacts to the Montana Historical Society resulting from the state's revenue shortfalls. But I also want to count the Society's blessings. We have so much to be thankful for.

We are most grateful for our many enthusiastic friends. On any day of the year, we value your presence at programs, your notes of appreciation, and your letters, calls, and emails of historical inquiry. We appreciate your membership in the Society, both the contributions that membership provides to our educational efforts and your willingness to be involved in the life of our organization. Your outright gifts of cash help us sustain even core programs. Our collections grow deeper from your donation of archival materials, photographs, and artifacts. And, this past August, when our budget was threatened with major cuts, in one voice, you rallied to our support. We could not have been more humble and proud when we learned that you had flooded your legislators with impassioned pleas for our survival.

I am also grateful for the enthusiastic, dedicated, creative work of our 50-some staff members. These are not easy times to be a public servant. It can be popular to attack public employees as incompetent or lazy, but that criticism could not be further from the truth here at the Society. We were short staffed before budget cuts began. We have now lost almost four full positions. There is only little hope for state employee pay increases. Still, our

remaining employees cope with their enormous and complex workloads with speed, care, and professionalism. They enjoy serving you.

This past year brought all of us much to celebrate. The Montana History Foundation completed enough of our new Scriver Center to put our Scriver holdings and some archival materials into better storage. Many Helena leaders helped us to evaluate potential sites for a new Montana History Center—a solid first step toward constructing an adequate home for the Society. Enthusiastic art and history lovers again rallied to the Western Rendezvous of Art and our annual Montana History Conference in Havre.

We are indeed blessed.

Fire Protection a Priority in Virginia City

Protecting Virginia City for generations to come is the goal of the ongoing Virginia City Fire Protection Project, funded by the National Park Service and the Montana History Foundation, and overseen by the Montana Heritage Commission. A \$300,000 grant from the National Park Service, through its "Save America's Treasures" program, and \$300,000 of private funds, in the process of being raised by the Montana History Foundation, will provide funding to rewire fifteen of Virginia City's most endangered structures, prune the undergrowth around buildings, and install water mains to make water cannons available for fighting fire. The Montana History Foundation has raised \$211,000 of the \$300,000 match required by the National Park Service. You can help with this project to protect Virginia City from fire by donating to: Virginia City Save America's Treasures Grant Match, Montana History Foundation, PO Box 863, Helena, MT 59624.

History Happenings

- On February 3, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., the Montana Historical Society is hosting an **open house for teachers**. The open house will highlight our new collection of educational outreach resources (footlockers) developed over the last year with a grant from the E. L. Wiegand Foundation. Demonstrations of our new educational tours of the museum galleries will also be available. This event will provide Helena-area educators with an opportunity to learn for the first time or reacquaint themselves with the Society's resources and offerings. Call 406-444-4789 for more information.
- The **Biennial State Historic Preservation Awards** will be held on January 15, 2002, in Helena. The ceremony will honor the owners of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places during the past two years, as well as special award recipients. This event serves to recognize those who cherish and work to preserve our collective heritage.
- Sometimes called the "writiestest explorers," Lewis and Clark kept extensive diaries and mapped a quarter of the continent during their voyage of discovery. Using the rich collections of the Library and Archives, a new exhibit at the Society will focus on the primary documents, maps, art, and artifacts generated by, and in response to, the expedition. The public opening reception for "**Documenting the Corps of Discovery**" will be held February 12, 2003, at 6:30 p.m.–9:00 p.m. At 8:00 p.m. Michael McNeilly & Co. will perform "The Lost Journals of Lewis and Clark." Small compass souvenirs will be given to all children in attendance to keep them oriented and help them proceed on.
- The Library / Archives Program is pleased to announce the addition of **records of the Montana Brands Enforcement Division** to our collection. These records document brands registered in the State of Montana dating back to 1873. Each record includes an illustration of the brand as well as information on who registered it and when. For more information on these records, please contact Molly Miller in the Archives at 406-444-7482 or momiller@mt.gov.
- The State Historic Preservation Office is pleased to announce the employment of two new Montana Historical Society staff, beginning November 4, 2002. **Pete Brown** has taken the place of Herb Dawson as Historic Architecture Specialist. Pete, who has a M.S. in Historic Preservation from Ball State University, was most recently employed as a Historic Engineer by Simpson, Gumpertz & Heger, Consulting Engineers in Arlington, Massachusetts. No stranger to Montana, Pete has relatives in the Havre area. **Rolene Schliesman** will take the place of Chere Jiusto as Community Preservation Coordinator/Architectural Historian. Rolene holds an M.A. in Historic Preservation from Goucher College, Maryland. She served as the National Register Coordinator for the North Dakota SHPO for nine years and brings with her an extensive background in Northern Plains historic properties and working with local preservation commissions.
- A heartfelt **thank you** to the **Friends of the Society** for a record of 3,106 hours for the second quarter of the 2002-2003 year! The volunteers are hard at work in every department of the Society. If you are interested in joining the Friends, contact Delight Sullivan at 406-444-9553.
- The article "Montana Vigilantes and the Origins of 3-7-77," written by Frederick Allen and published in the spring 2001 issue of *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, has received national recognition by winning the **Michael P. Malone Award**, an award given to the best article published in a magazine on state, provincial, or territorial history in North America. Named in honor of the late president of Montana

State University, the award was presented to Allen at the annual conference of the Western History Association, recently held in Colorado Springs.

- In August **Lory Morrow**, Photograph Archives supervisor, attended a weeklong seminar at the George Eastman House (GEH) in Rochester, New York. Titled "Preserving Photographs in a Digital World," the seminar included lectures and workshops given by internationally known curators, conservators, and archivists from the GEH, the Rochester Institute of Technology, and the National Archives. Forty-eight participants, representing institutions in Canada, the United States, Switzerland, and the Dominican Republic, heard lectures on the history and technology of photographic materials, preservation and collection management strategies for photographic collections, and the theory and practice of digital imaging. Lectures were followed by workshops in which participants identified vintage negatives and prints, explored the causes of deterioration of photographs, and observed image database systems in practice.
- **Montana The Magazine of Western History welcomes new board members** and bids farewell to some old friends. Phil Deloria (University of Michigan), Gary Dunham (University of Nebraska Press), Clyde Ellis (Elon College), and Nancy Scott Jackson (University Press of Kansas) have recently joined the board. Richard Etulain, Paula Mitchell Marks, Martin Ridge, and Clark Spence have retired from the board after many years of invaluable service. They will be missed.
- Over 200 people attended the **29th annual Montana History Conference in Havre**. The conference kicked off with workshops for educators, local historians, and preservationists, followed by a keynote address on Meriwether Lewis's travels near the Hi-Line by noted Lewis and Clark scholar John Logan Allen. Other highlights included presentations by Deirdre McNamer, Mary Clearman Blew, and Judy Blunt, who each read from their works and talked about how their northern Montana experiences influenced their writing; a trio of former railroaders from the Havre area, who spoke about their lives and work; and Bradley Research Fellow Michel Hogue, who presented his research about Canadian Cree Indians in Montana. The conference was a great success, thanks to a great deal of support and assistance from the community in Hill and Blaine counties. We look forward to seeing everyone next year in Helena, October 23–25!
- This December marks the **fiftieth anniversary** of the **Montana Historical Society's acquisition** of the Malcolm S. Mackay family's remarkable collection of C. M. Russell artwork. The collection, sold to the state in 1952 for \$50,000—a fraction of its real worth—represented the broad spectrum of Russell's career from early works executed in the 1890s to pieces completed shortly before the artist's death in 1926. Forty-three of these works arrived at the Society in December 1952, including the much-loved paintings *Charlie Russell and His Friends* and *Bronc' to Breakfast*.

Trustees, Montana MAM, MPA, Present Awards at History Conference

The 29th annual Montana History Conference provided the opportunity to present several awards, including the 2002 Society Board of Trustees Award and the Trustees Award for Educational Excellence.

Crow Native American historian Howard Boggess, who was born in Lodge Grass and now resides in Billings, received the 2002 Society Board of Trustees Award. Boggess was honored for his life-long dedication to traditional tribal learning, his museum work in Hardin, and his important efforts to preserve sacred and historic sites.

MSU Billings English Professor Sue Hart received the trustee's Award for Educational Excellence for her commitment, expertise, and inspiration in the fields of Montana literature and history.

Montana The Magazine of History awarded Alice Wondrak (University of Colorado) the 2002 Burlingame-Toole Prize, for her article "Wrestling with Horace Albright: Edmund Rogers, Visitors, and Bears in Yellow stone National Park." The award is given by the editorial staff for the best student essay submitted to the magazine. Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith's "World Champions: The 1904 Girls' Basketball Team from Fort Shaw Indian Boarding School" is this year's winner of the Vivian A. Paladin Award, selected annually by the magazine's editorial board for the best article published in the *Montana*. Peavy and Smith also won the award in 1986 for their "Women in Waiting in the Westward Movement."

The 2002 Peter Yegen, Jr., Museums Association of Montana Achievement Award, which recognizes long-term commitment and outstanding contribution by individuals within Montana's museum community, was awarded posthumously to Sam Bibler of Kalispell, whose determination and hard work resulted in the City of Kalispell acquiring the Conrad Mansion as an historic house museum.

Montana Preservation Alliance recognized Sonny and Mary Lee Comes, for their preservation of the historic dairy barn on the Comes ranch; Eric and Carol Schneider, for their restoration of Livingston's Auditorium Building; and Chris Harris, legislator from Bozeman, for writing and sponsoring House Bill 619, which passed into law during the 2001 session. The law allows owners of historic properties to take tax credits for establishing easements on significant historic properties and for the repair and upkeep of the buildings on the site.

Washington Foundation Supports History Scholars

For the fourth consecutive year, the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation partnered with the Montana Historical Society to promote Montana history research and writing on the college level. At the 2002 Montana History Conference, the Foundation underwrote two sessions of college-level presentations: "Showcasing Montana History Scholars" and "Showcasing Montana Tribal-College History Scholars."

"Montana History Scholars" included Brad Vaudt of Montana State University-Northern, Jerry Frank of the University of Montana-Missoula, and Rusty Hawkins of Montana State University-Bozeman. Linda Juneau of Blackfeet Community College, John L. Mitchell, Jr., of Stone Child College, and Joan Johnson of Fort Belknap Community College were the "Montana Tribal-College History Scholars."

Since 1999 the Washington Foundation has underwritten all expenses for the college scholars to attend the conference. In addition the Foundation grants the "Washington Foundation Award for Historical Excellence" and a \$1,000 scholarship to each student-presenter.

Cooperative Projects Bear Fruit for MHS Press

The four new books published this fall by the Montana Historical Society Press address diverse aspects of Montana history, but they have one thing in common: all were made possible through partnerships.

Montana Historical Society Press and Salish Kootenai College Press copublished the fourth book in the Indian Reading Series, *How Marten Got His Spots and Other Kootenai Stories*. This latest release in the series includes the stories "Coyote and Trout," "Little Weasel's Dream," and "Tepee Making." The stories deal with important lessons including obedience, sharing and greed, the importance of listening to elders, and learning to build tepees.

The sixth volume in the Montana Mainstreets series, *Guide to Historic Missoula*, by Allan James Mathews, explores the origins, growth, and architecture of Montana's "Garden City." The project would not have been possible without funding and intellectual support from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office and the Office of Planning and Grants, City and County of Missoula.

Two Western History Classics books were released this fall: *The Story of Mary MacLane by Herself* and *War of the Copper Kings*, by C. B. Glasscock. Written by the "Wild Woman of Butte," The Story of Mary MacLane shocked the nation when it was published in 1902; soon rebellious young women all across the country were accused of practicing "MacLaneism." First published in 1935, *War of the Copper Kings* offers a dramatic account of the fight to control Butte and the Richest Hill on Earth. Both books are part of the Western History Classics series, copublished with Riverbend Publishing. The series aims to bring back into print Montana books that have the power to illuminate some aspect of the region's rich literary and cultural heritage.